

1 October 2008

## Chem-Bio News

**1. MY BLACKBERRY AS A BOMB SNIFFER?:** *"Expensive radiation detectors may not be as effective as widely distributed chips in cell phones."*

**2. FEWER SIDE EFFECTS IN NEW ANTHRAX VACCINE REGIMEN:** *"According to new research published in the October 1 issue of JAMA [Journal of the American Medical Association], changing administration and dosing of an anthrax vaccine gives favorable results and reduces side effects."*

**3. PIRATES DIE STRANGELY AFTER TAKING IRANIAN SHIP:** *"The vessel's declared cargo consists of "minerals" and "industrial products". But officials involved in negotiations over the ship are convinced that it was sailing for Eritrea to deliver small arms and **chemical weapons to Somalia's Islamist rebels.**" [emphasis added]*

**4. WHEN PARTICLES ARE SO SMALL THAT THEY SEEP RIGHT THROUGH SKIN:** *"Scientists are finding that particles that are barely there – tiny objects known as nanoparticles that have found a home in electronics, food containers, sunscreens, and a variety of applications – can breach our most personal protective barrier: The skin."*

**5. FBI WON'T RELEASE DOCUMENTS ON ANTHRAX SUSPECT:** *"The FBI is declining to release at least 15,000 pages of documents related to the now deceased prime suspect in the 2001 anthrax attacks despite lingering suspicions that the bureau has accused the wrong man."*

**6. SPAIN SEEKS STOLEN CASE WITH LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL:** *"Spain's nuclear safety agency issued an alert Monday after a case of equipment containing low-level radioactive material was stolen from a road works site, the second such incident this year."*

## Chem-Demil News

**1. PANEL URGES MOVING WASTE FROM DESTROYED CHEMICAL WEAPONS:** *"A National Research Council committee has recommended that waste created from destroying chemical weapons in central Kentucky should be moved elsewhere for disposal."*

# CB Daily Report

## Chem-Bio News

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### MY BLACKBERRY AS A BOMB SNIFFER?

By Benjamin Sutherland

Newsweek

September 27, 2008

"What do bananas, smoke alarms, toilets and large granite buildings have in common?"

They're all sufficiently radioactive to set off detectors. Efforts since 9/11 to prevent the detonation of a dirty bomb—an explosive device designed to spread lethal radiation as well as panic—are plagued by the risk of false alarms. When 350,000 or so radiation-therapy patients in the United States and Europe can cause detectors to light up if they get close enough, you know a solution isn't going to be easy to find.

And it hasn't been. The current state of the art, "spectroscopic" detectors, can distinguish between the harmless beta rays given off by the potassium-40 in bananas and the very dangerous gamma rays from uranium and plutonium, which are used to produce nuclear fuel and nuclear weapons. But they're expensive."

"Technologists at Purdue University in Indiana are determined to avoid that pitfall. "We have to fight this American knee-jerk toward the highest tech," says Andrew Longman, a project leader. The Purdue team is designing a detection system that's so small it could fit into cell phones. The project, known as Distributed Nuclear Detection by Ubiquitous Cell Phone, would help locate dirty bombs or nuclear weapons by "triangulating" the source of radiation when people carrying mobile phones pass by. (The greater the number of equipped cell phones, the greater the precision: phones closest to radioactive material would register stronger signals.)"

The full article can be found at: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/161056>

[Return to Top](#)

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## **FEWER SIDE EFFECTS IN NEW ANTHRAX VACCINE REGIMEN**

Medical News Today  
October 1, 2008

"According to new research published in the October 1 issue of JAMA [Journal of the American Medical Association], changing administration and dosing of an anthrax vaccine gives favorable results and reduces side effects. Specifically, researchers found that fewer doses of intramuscularly injected of an anthrax vaccine results in similar levels of effectiveness and fewer adverse events than the current vaccination regimen.

"Simpler and better tolerated regimens for vaccination with anthrax vaccine adsorbed (AVA) are needed," write the researchers who are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, and the Anthrax Vaccine Research Program Working Group. Currently, the licensed AVA vaccination regimen is injected subcutaneously (below the skin) at 0, 2, and 4 weeks, 6, 12 and 18 months, and annual boosters following. There is not a lot of data that support this vaccination regimen."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/123314.php>

[Return to Top](#)

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## PIRATES DIE STRANGELY AFTER TAKING IRANIAN SHIP

By Andrew Donaldson  
The Times [South Africa]  
October 1, 2008

"Somali pirates suffered skin burns, lost hair and fell gravely ill "within days" of boarding the MV Iran Deyanat. Some of them died.

Andrew Mwangura, the director of the East African Seafarers' Assistance Programme, told the Sunday Times: "We don't know exactly how many, but the information that I am getting is that some of them had died. There is something very wrong about that ship."

The vessel's declared cargo consists of "minerals" and "industrial products". But officials involved in negotiations over the ship are convinced that it was sailing for Eritrea to deliver small arms and ***chemical weapons to Somalia's Islamist rebels***. [emphasis added]

The drama over the Iran Deyanat comes as speculation grew this week about whether the South African Navy would send a vessel to join the growing multinational force in the region."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.thetimes.co.za/PrintEdition/Article.aspx?id=851953>

[Return to Top](#)

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## WHEN PARTICLES ARE SO SMALL THAT THEY SEEP RIGHT THROUGH SKIN

NanoTechwire.com  
October 1, 2008

"Scientists are finding that particles that are barely there – tiny objects known as nanoparticles that have found a home in electronics, food containers, sunscreens, and a variety of applications – can breach our most personal protective barrier: The skin.

The particles under scrutiny by Lisa DeLouise, Ph.D., are almost unfathomably tiny. The particles are less than one five-thousandth the width of a human hair. If the width of that strand of hair were equivalent to the length of a football field, a typical nanoparticle wouldn't even belly up to the one-inch line.

In the September issue of the journal Nano Letters, a team led by DeLouise at the University of Rochester Medical Center published a paper showing that nanoparticles pass through the skin of a living organism, a type of mouse commonly used as a model to study the damaging effects of sunlight.

It's the strongest evidence yet indicating that some nanoparticles are so small that they can actually seep through skin, especially when the skin has been damaged."

The full article can be found at: <http://nanotechwire.com/news.asp?nid=6708>

[Return to Top](#)

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## **FBI WON'T RELEASE DOCUMENTS ON ANTHRAX SUSPECT**

By Marisa Taylor

The Miami Herald

September 30, 2008

"The FBI is declining to release at least 15,000 pages of documents related to the now deceased prime suspect in the 2001 anthrax attacks despite lingering suspicions that the bureau has accused the wrong man.

In August, the FBI and Justice Department identified Bruce Ivins, a former microbiologist at the U.S. Army's biological weapons research center at Fort Detrick, Md., as the "only person involved" in the attacks that killed five people and terrorized the nation.

But David M. Hardy, the section chief of the FBI's records management division, notified McClatchy Newspapers that his office could not immediately release the records because there were "investigative leads still open" and the FBI needed to withhold the documents in order to protect confidential sources, privacy, law enforcement techniques and a suspect's right to a fair trial."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/politics/AP/story/708091.html>

[Return to Top](#)

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## **SPAIN SEEKS STOLEN CASE WITH LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL**

Agence France-Presse on Google News

September 30, 2008

"Spain's nuclear safety agency issued an alert Monday after a case of equipment containing low-level radioactive material was stolen from a road works site, the second such incident this year.

The case was part of a kit for geologists to measure the density and humidity of the soil and it contains two sources of low-level radioactivity, the Nuclear Safety Council (CNS) said in a statement.

It was taken from a site in the town of Vilanova del Valles near the northeastern port city of Barcelona, it added."

The full article can be found at: [http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5ipNH\\_13VogPMbgplzfumKA9iK4fg](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5ipNH_13VogPMbgplzfumKA9iK4fg)

[Return to Top](#)

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## ***Chem-Demil News***

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### **PANEL URGES MOVING WASTE FROM DESTROYED CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

The Associated Press in The Herald Dispatch

September 30, 2008

"A National Research Council committee has recommended that waste created from destroying chemical weapons in central Kentucky should be moved elsewhere for disposal.

The committee's report released Tuesday said offsite disposal of the secondary waste would have benefits that include a shorter time for completion. But the Lexington Herald-Leader reports the committee says the option may not be favorable for other reasons."

The full article can be found at: <http://mobile.herald-dispatch.com/news/briefs/x1464130890>

[Return to Top](#)

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